



# Work-Study Allowance Program

## U.S Department of Veterans Affairs



# Overview

- What is the VA Work-Study program?
- Who is eligible to participate?
- Student Qualifications?
- What type of facilities are approved?
- What type of work/ duties can be performed?
- Student application process
- Student selection process
- Responsibilities as a Site Supervisor
- Action taken after VA receives Work-Study application request.
- Maximum hours and how they are determined.
- Contracts and Extensions- What is the difference?
- How are Work-Study Payments made?
- Work-Study issues.

# What is the VA Work-Study Program?

- VA Education benefit (tax exempt)
- A supplement to the education benefit.
- An additional allowance paid to students for performing VA-related activities.

# How does the Work-Study Program benefit your school?

- No cost to the school
- Students help with VA related activities
- Students assist Veteran students with benefits and services
- Potential to transition to full-time employment

# Who is Eligible to participate?

Students receiving VA education benefits through Title 38 or Title 10 under one of the following education programs :

- Ch30: Montgomery GI Bill® (MGIB)
- Ch31: Vocational Rehabilitation
- Ch32: Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP)
- Ch35: Dependents Educational Assistance (DEA)
- Ch1606: MGIB – Selected Reserve (SR)
- Ch1607: Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) (SUNSET)
- Ch33: Post-9/11 GI Bill, including Transfer of Entitlement (TOE) and Fry Scholarship recipients

# Student Qualifications

- Students must be in receipt of an education benefit and training at a minimum of  $\frac{3}{4}$  training time (or 75% ROP for Ch33 participants) or higher.
- Students must work at a VA approved work site

**\*\*Students who have exhausted their education benefits and have a remaining education debt, may qualify for work-study\*\***

# Approved Facilities –What's New?

## **Section 201 of the Colmery Act: Work Study Permanent Authorization**

Services performed under a VA work-study program must be related to VA work. Students can work at any VA facility, State Veterans agency, Department of Defense facilities, or even at their school helping the School Certifying Official or fellow Veteran students. Other work-study activities for which an individual may be paid include outreach services for a State Approving Agency (SAA), providing hospital and domiciliary care and medical treatment to Veterans in a State home, or performing an activity relating to the administration of a national cemetery or a state Veterans' cemetery.

Prior to this Act, Congress had to reapprove these additional activities periodically. **With the passage of the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017, these work-study activities will continue indefinitely.**

# Approved Facilities

What type of facilities are approved for VA Work-Study?

- VA Facilities
- Educational Institutions including Veteran Success Centers on Campus
- Department of Defense (DoD), Coast Guard or National Guard
- National or State Veterans Cemetery
- Outreach assisting SAA
- Hospital and Domiciliary Care at State Homes
- Other Non-VA Facilities (VFW, DAV, MOPH, etc.)



# Approved Duties

(at Educational Facilities)

Educational facilities are limited to the type of work/ duties their work study students can perform

*M22-4, Part1 Chapter 9: 9.11d(1).*

These include:

- Dissemination of general information regarding veteran benefits and/or services
- Preparation, processing, maintaining and organizing veteran-related files
- VA outreach in a cooperative supervisory effort with a VA employee who is controlling the work activities.

# Approved Duties

(continued)

- Must perform work specifically listed in the site's job description
- Only tasks that require 100% performance of VA-related activities
- Must work solely at the specific work site listed on the Work-Study time record
- Currently, Work-Study students can **ONLY** provide transportation or operate a motorized vehicle for VA facilities

# How do Students Apply for the Work-Study Benefit?

- Once your site has been approved to participate in the VA Work Study program, your outreach process to bring these students on board may begin.
- You may assist the student in filling out the **VA Form 22-8691**, *Application for Work-Study Allowance*, then submit it electronically or by fax to the work study department; NOTE: please ensure field 11, “Work Site Preference” has been completed.
- VA Form 22-8691 can be found on the GI Bill website.
- Interviewing is recommended

# Student Selection Process

In selecting students for participation in the work study program, the following factors need to be carefully considered and evaluated:

- **Service-connected disabilities have priority**

Veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 30% or more should be afforded priority.

- Financial need

# Student Selection Process

(cont.)

- Availability of transportation
- Motivation
- Work assignments don't conflict with disability

*If the student has a disability ensure that the work assignment is compatible with the disability. If you discover the disability after placing the student, try to accommodate the individual as you would a regular employee. You may consult your local HR or contact VA Work-Study Dept. if you have questions.*

# Site Supervisor Responsibilities

As an approved Work-Study Site Supervisor you are responsible for the following:

- Provide direct supervision
- Provide appropriate training
- Ensure only approved tasks are performed
- Ensure only approved hours are worked and properly reported for payment
- Maintain the work study records for a minimum of 3 years
- Read and understand the *Work-Study Supervisor Handbook*

# What Happens After VA Receives the Application?

- The application is reviewed for accuracy
  - If approved, a Work-Study contract is initiated. A notification letter containing a contract and time record is emailed to the work site supervisor; the contract will clearly state the time frame and number of approved hours.
  - \* *Important, if your student requested Advanced Payment it's important to have the student sign the contract as soon as possible so that the advancement can be released. The site supervisor is responsible for returning a copy of the signed contract to VA.*
  - If denied, a detailed denial letter is sent to the student; a courtesy email will be sent to the site supervisor.

# VERY IMPORTANT!

- Work-Study students can only begin working after the contract or extension is approved by the VA
- Agreements may not begin earlier than 30 days before term, or end more than 30 days after term
- Hours worked prior to approval, after a contract ends, or are in excess of the approved hours **CANNOT** be paid



# Maximum Hours of Service

- The maximum number of hours of Work-Study service that a student may perform during or between a period of enrollment is limited to 25 times the number of weeks in the applicable enrollment period excluding the period between the enrollments.
- Students are not limited to the number of hours they may work each day/week, but are limited by the number of hours approved on their contract

# Maximum Hours of Service

(cont.)

- Students are **not** eligible to receive overtime compensation
- Students **are** covered under Worker's Compensation laws for the duration of their Work-Study contract, but are not considered employees of the Department of Veteran Affairs

# What is the Difference between a Contract and an Extension?

- A contract is an original agreement between the student and VA.
- An extension is a continuation of the original agreement for **up to one year** from the beginning of the original contract; can be extended multiple times.

# Zero Hour Extensions

- What are they?- An addition of up to 30 days added on to the last contract period to allow students the ability to work any remaining hours from that contract. NO extra hours are awarded, only time.
- Zero hour extensions **must be requested**. An extension granting up to an additional 30 days can be approved- depending on when the request was received and future enrollments.

# Work-Study Payments

## How are Work-Study payments made?

- Students can be paid every 50 hours or every two weeks, whichever comes first
- Students are paid the higher of either the state or federal minimum wage rate
- Time Records are processed in order of receipt

## Actions to take to ensure payments are processed timely.

- Site supervisors review time record for errors in math or date, they ensure the time record is initialed/signed and hours are kept cumulative
- Site supervisors should **email** Work-Study student's time record to VA
- VA **CANNOT** make time record corrections

# Work-Study Issues

- What to do if you are having issues with a Work-Study student?
  - Look for a resolution
  - Request the student be relocated
  - Terminate the Work-Study contract
- What if the student provided inaccurate information on his time record?
  - Work with the student to correct the time record
  - Notify the Work-Study department if further assistance is needed

# Work-Study Issues

(cont.)

What if my student **reduces or terminates** from their enrollment?

- Report this to the work study department as quickly as possible.
  - *If the student **reduced**, then in most instances we allow the student to continue /finish the contract. If we notice a pattern of continuous reductions we will notify you and your student of this concern.*
  - If the student **terminates**, the contract will be stopped at the end of the month in which they withdrew (in non-advanced pay claims). If the student received an advancement then the student may be allowed to work until that advancement is returned.

# Work-Study Issues

(cont.)

- What if I as the Site Supervisor promote from or leave my position?

- Notify the Work-Study Department or
- Fill out and submit page 22 of your Site Supervisor Handbook to the VA Work-Study Dept.

- What if my student gets injured?

- Make sure your student is ok, seek aid.
- Document the incident and contact Work-Study Dept. as soon as you are aware of the incident.
- Notify VA Work-Study Dept. A CA-1 form will be sent to you. Complete the form and return to the VA Work-Study Dept.



# How Can You Request to Become an Approved Work-Site?

- Contact the VA Work-Study Department via email, RNW, or by phone to request a copy of the Application /Position Description form
- Complete the Application/Position Description form and return it to the Work-Study department for review and approval
- Once approved, you will be sent a copy of the Work Study Site Supervisor Handbook.

# What if I Need Assistance?

- Refer to the *Work-Study Allowance Program Site Supervisor Handbook*
- GI Bill website: [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov)
- Contact the Muskogee RPO Work-Study Department

# Muskogee RPO Work-Study Contact Information

~ Monday - Friday from 8 am to 5 pm CST ~

Phone: (918) 781-7878

\*\*\*Note: this line is for SITE SUPERVISORS ONLY\*\*\*

Email: [workstudy.vbamus@va.gov](mailto:workstudy.vbamus@va.gov)

RNW: [https://gibill.custhelp.com/app/utils/login\\_form/redirect/ask](https://gibill.custhelp.com/app/utils/login_form/redirect/ask)

Fax: (918) 781-7868 or (918) 781-7785

Mail: Work-Study Department

Muskogee Regional Processing Office

125 South Main

Muskogee OK 74401

# Questions?

